

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the above-identified application are respectfully requested. Claims 19-30 are now pending, wherein claims 11-18 are canceled and claims 19-30 are new. Claims 19 and 21-26 are identical to canceled claims 11-18 except for the claim numbering.

The title is objected to as not being descriptive. The title is replaced with the suggested title in the Office Action, and accordingly withdrawal of this objection is respectfully requested.

The abstract is objected to for referencing the drawings. The abstract is amended to delete this reference and also to limit the abstract to less than 150 words. Accordingly, withdrawal of this objection is respectfully requested.

The claims are objected to because the original claims were canceled but the new claims were reused some of the numbers of the previous claims. Accordingly, the claims added in the Preliminary Amendment are canceled and represented as new claims 19, 21-25 and 27.

The drawings are objected to for minor informalities. The attached sheets of drawings includes changes to FIGs. 1 and 2 to include descriptive labels and to replace reference numeral 16 in the lower portion of FIG. 2 with reference numeral 13. These changes address the objection to the drawings and the objection should be withdrawn.

Claim 18 is objected to for minor informalities. New claim 27, which corresponds to claim 18, is amended in the manner suggested by the Office Action. Accordingly, withdrawal of this objection is respectfully requested.

Claims 16 and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101 as not being directed to statutory subject matter. This ground of rejection is respectfully traversed.

New claims 25 and 26 (which correspond to claims 16 and 17) depend from new claim 19 (which corresponds to claim 11). The Office Action does not assert that claim 11 is not directed to statutory subject matter. Accordingly, claims 16 and 17 are directed to statutory subject matter at least by virtue of their dependency from claim 11.

Claims 11-18 are rejected for obviousness under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) in view of the combination of U.S. patent No. 7,287,082 to O'Toole, Jr. ("O'Toole") and U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0002621 to Zhang et al. ("Zhang"). This ground of rejection is respectfully traversed.

The combination of O'Toole and Zhang does not render new claim 19 obvious because the combination does not disclose or suggest a monitor that sends "a message indicative of non-usage to the connection controller".

The rejection of claim 11 relies upon idle connection reduction device 135 in FIGURE 1 of O'Toole as corresponding to the claimed connection controller and appears to rely upon idle connection handling process 220 in FIGURE 2 of O'Toole as corresponding to the claimed monitor. As illustrated in FIGURES 1 and 2 of O'Toole (reproduced below), idle connection handling process 220 is a component of idle connection reduction device 135.

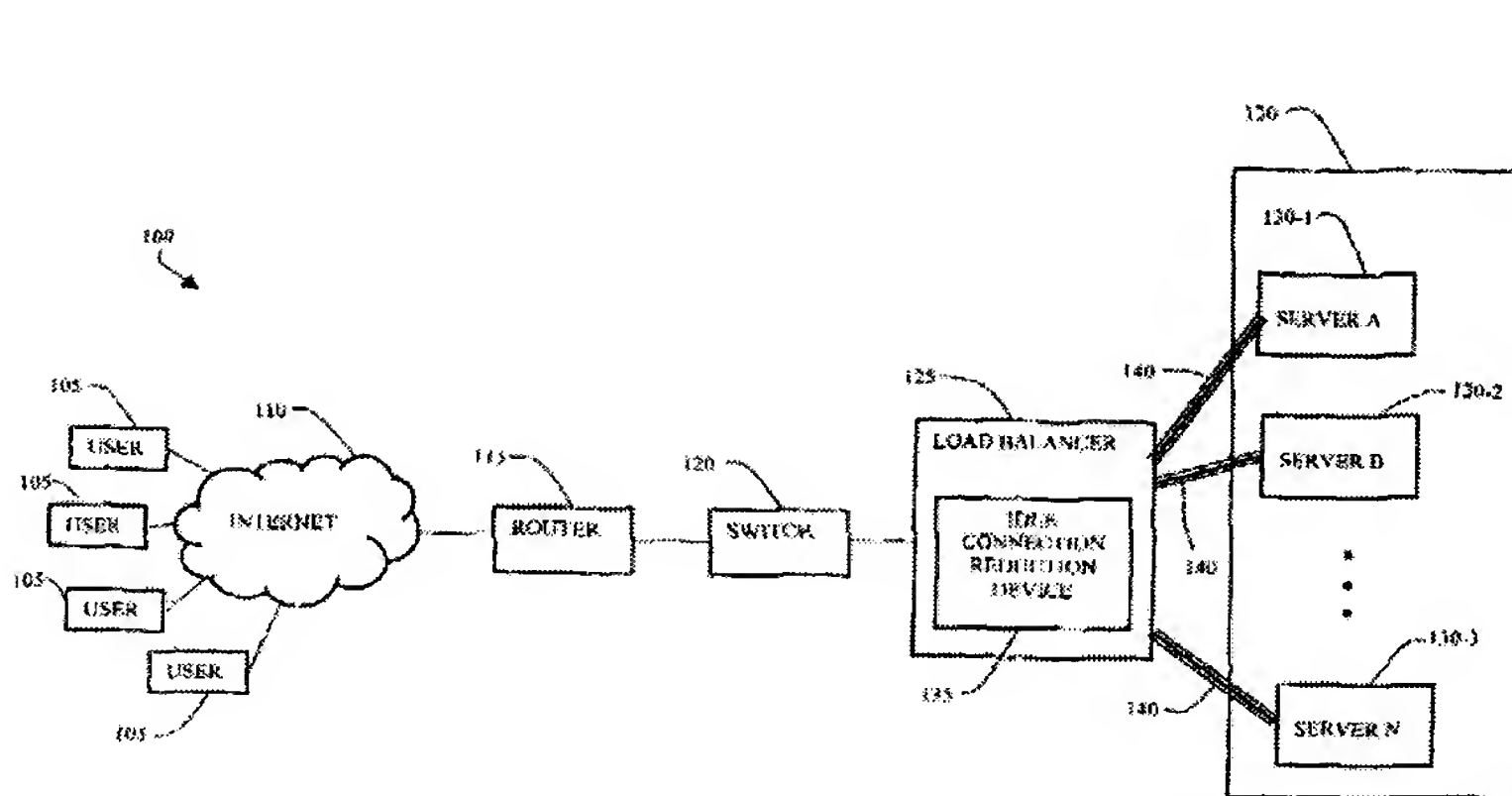


FIGURE 1

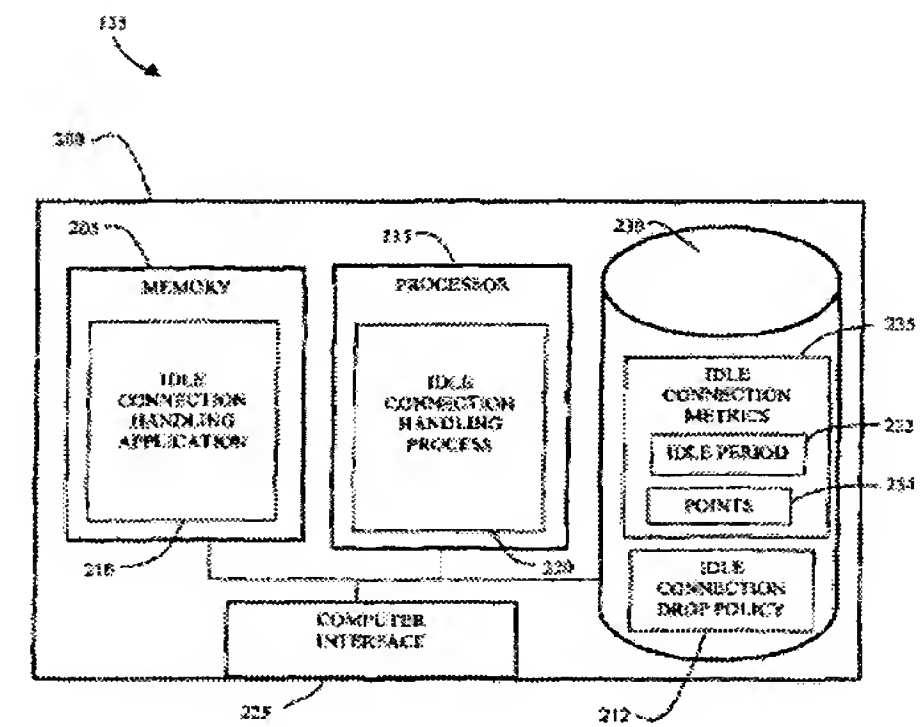


FIGURE 2

O'Toole does not, however, disclose or suggest that idle connection handling process 220 sends “a message indicative of non-usage to” idle connection reduction device 135, i.e., idle connection reduction device 135 does not send a message to itself. Instead, O'Toole discloses that the monitoring and dropping of the connections is handled entirely within idle connection handling process 220. To be sure, O'Toole discloses that idle connection handling process 220:

- monitors the connections 140 to detect an idle drop condition;
- operates using an idle connection drop policy 212 based on idle connection metrics 235 to decide which connections to drop when a server 130 develops the condition to drop idle connections; and
- selectively drops idle connections according to the idle connection drop policy 212 according to the idle connection metrics.¹

Zhang is cited for a network address translator (NAT), but does not remedy the above-identified deficiencies of O'Toole. Accordingly, the combination of O'Toole and Zhang does not disclose or suggest a monitor that

¹ Column 7, lines 2962.

sends “a message indicative of non-usage to the connection controller”, and therefore does not render claim 19 obvious.

New claims 20-26 are patentably distinguishable over the combination of O’Toole and Zhang at least by virtue of their dependency from claim 19.

New claim 27 is similar to previous claim 18. New claim 27 recites that “when the interface is unused for the connections to the ports, the monitor sends a message to the network controller to break the connection between the router and the another network.” This feature is not disclosed or suggested by the combination of O’Toole and Zhang.

O’Toole discloses that “the idle connection reduction device 135 detects an idle drop condition to drop idle connections from the set of connections 140.”² As illustrated in FIGURE 1 of O’Toole (reproduced below), connections 140 are between load balancer 125 and plurality of servers 130, and not between router 115 and users 105 or between router 115 and load balancer 125. Thus, O’Toole’s disclosure of dropping connections 140 does not disclose or suggest dropping connections between router 115 and another network as required by claim 27.

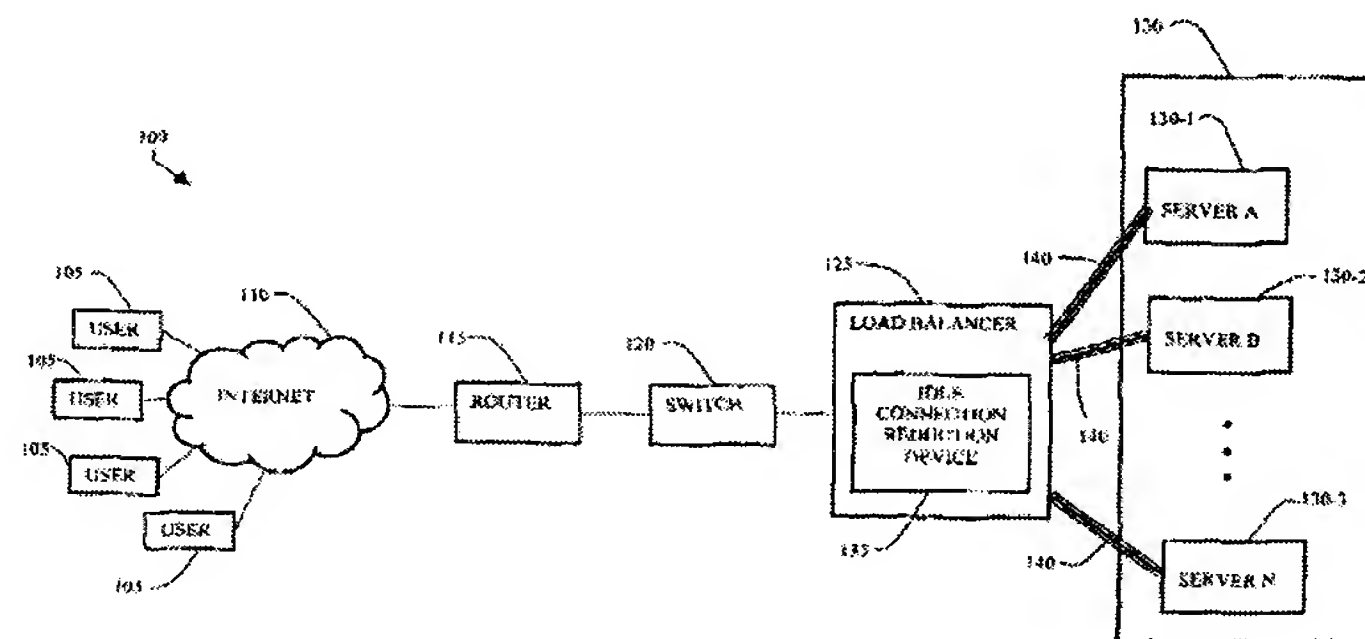


FIGURE 1

² Column 9, lines 48-50.

Zhang does not remedy the above-identified deficiencies of O'Toole with respect to claim 27, and accordingly the combination of O'Toole and Zhang does not render claim 27 obvious. Claim 28 is patentably distinguishable over the current grounds of rejection at least by virtue of its dependency from claim 27.

Claim 29 recites similar elements to those discussed above with regard to claim 19 and is patentably distinguishable over the current grounds of rejection for similar reasons. Claim 30 is patentably distinguishable over the current grounds of rejection at least by virtue of its dependency from claim 29.

For at least those reasons set forth above, it is respectfully submitted that new claims 19-30 are patentably distinguishable over the current grounds of rejection.

If there are any questions regarding this amendment or the application in general, a telephone call to the undersigned would be appreciated since this should expedite the prosecution of the application for all concerned. If necessary to effect a timely response, this paper should be considered as a petition for an Extension of Time sufficient to effect a timely response, and please charge any deficiency in fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 05-1323 (Docket # 105247.57619US).

Respectfully submitted,

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